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IMPERIAL INFRASTRUCTURES OF COMMUNICATION ACROSS EURASIA

CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE EURASIAN TRANSFORMATIONS LECTURE EVENT

Date and Time: Monday 8th June 2026, 17:00 CET

Venue: Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, University of Vienna

Seminar Room 1, Spitalgasse 2, Hof 2, Entrance 2.7, 1090 Vienna

For online participation, please register here:

<https://univien.zoom.us/join/9tJFt-7rWu2fIAthAXVg>



Program

17:00 Welcome **Tijana Krstic** (Central European University) and **Nina Mirnig** (University of Vienna)

17:05 Introduction **Sebastian Fink** (University of Innsbruck)

17:10 Lecture: *Assyrian Imperial Communication: Messengers, Animals, and Royal Roads*

Sanae Ito, Associate Professor, Research Center for Cultural Heritage and Texts, Nagoya University

The lecture examines the institutional framework of imperial communication in the Assyrian Empire, focusing on the interdependent roles of messengers, auxiliary personnel, pack animals, and the royal roads that structured the transmission of information across the empire. Drawing on royal correspondence and inscriptions, it explores how the Assyrian Empire organized the flow of messages between the imperial periphery and the capital. The lecture also considers the logistical realities of pre-modern overland travel – including the speed and carrying capacity of the animals – as an essential context for understanding how communication actually functioned in practice.

17:40 Panel Discussion: *Transregional Perspectives on Imperial Communication*

International experts on Ancient Iran, Ancient India, and the Ottoman Empire will offer perspectives rooted in the historical and cultural contexts of these regions and periods, situating imperial communication infrastructures within a broader comparative framework.

Perspectives from Ancient Iran: **M. Rahim Shayegan**, Professor of Iranian and the Ancient Near East, Jahangir and Eleanor Amuzegar Chair of Iranian and Director of the Pourdavoud Institute for the Study of the Iranian World and Yarshater Center for the Study of Iranian Literary Traditions, Chair of the Governance Board of Global Antiquity, University of California, Los Angeles (online)

Perspectives from Ancient India: **Upinder Singh**, Professor of History, Ashoka University (online)

Perspectives from the Ottoman Empire: **Tolga Esmer**, Professor at the Department of Historical Studies, Central European University

Moderated by **Tijana Krstic** and **Nina Mirnig**.

18:15 Reception